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ABSTRACT

This paper describes and reflects on the founding phase of the Center for Applied Research and Development in Education (CARD) at George Mason University in Fairfax, Virginia. The relation between schools and a university is focused upon with a special emphasis on the relation between individuals in each institution viewed as education professionals. Three central features of CARD are first described, followed by a discussion of five major challenges it presently confronts, as it begins to wrestle with practical professionalism. CARD's five major challenges are (1) the agenda; (2) ownership; (3) professional career conflict; (4) innovation; and (5) leadership. Appended are 17 references. (SI)

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The Case of the Center for Applied Research and Development in Education (CARD)

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COLLABORATION IN PROFESSIONALISM
The Case of the Center for Applied Research and Development in Education (CARD)

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In recent years the rhetoric of educational improvement has come to be couched in the language and lore of `profession'. (Darling-Hammond 1988: Sockett 1989). In the US, the Governors Report (Governors Report 1986) lauded the ideal of profession and suggested ways to achieve it: in the UK the White Paper Better Schools was equally enthusiastic that teaching be a profession.(HMSO: 1985) Eric Hoyle (Hoyle: 1980) made the significant distinction between professionalization, where the status of the occupation is at stake, and professionalism which focuses on the quality of practice. Views about educational theory and practice and their interrelations provide different criteria for the knowledge base of practice which yield different accounts of professionalism.

A central question is therefore posed: what shape ought educational institutions, whether school or school of education, to have if the aspiration for increased professionalism is well founded and in the light of changing understandings about the nature of theory and practice? If it is true that educational institutions imply a particular epistemology, presumably institutional shifts should follow as alternatives gain ground.

This paper describes and reflects on the founding phase of an institution, namely the Center for Applied Research and Development in Education (CARD) at George Mason University, Fairfax, Virginia which seeks to take the `practical model' seriously and embody its epistemology in an institutional frame. This addresses the relation between schools and a university, but more importantly the relation between individuals in each institution viewed as education professionals. If both the development of professionalism in teaching and the expansion of new understandings of an epistemology of practice are desirable, then we need to learn how to construct institutions to match these aspirations. The institution itself becomes an object for self-study, perhaps even a hypothesis about how such aspirations can be attained.

Three central features CARD are first described, followed by a discussion of five major challenges it presently confronts, as it begins to wrestle with practical professionalism.

A Brief History of CARD

Larry Bowen, Dean of the College of Education and Human Services at George Mason University, had spent several months in 1969 working with Lawrence Stenhouse and Barry Macdonald at The Humanities Project. He had been attracted by the general notion of a Center for Applied Research in Education (CARE) which Stenhouse and Macdonald came to found at the University of East Anglia in 1970. In his work as Dean, Bowen had been anxious to promote strong relationships between his college and the school

districts (or divisions as they are called in Virginia), particularly with Fairfax County Public Schools, the tenth largest district in the US where the University is located. This initiative took the usual forms of collaborative committees on specific projects and topics. Simultaneously across the nation other such collaborations were being attempted, notably by John Goodlad and others through the Center for Educational Renewal. (Sirotnik et al 1988)

Following a visit to the University of East Anglia in 1984, Bowen determined to push ahead with the idea of founding a Center which would have some similarity to CARE but with a broader scope. He created interest across a number of school divisions and, after a period of discussion and consultation, received from a planning committee representative of university faculty and school division personnel a mission statement for CARD. It focused on the significance of collaboration and on practice-based research and development.

The context for this initiative is particular and promising. First, George Mason University is in the process of transformation from a small college to a `major player' in Higher Education in Virginia under the guidance of President George Johnson. Johnson believes that the University should be identified with a strong commitment to the community and should also be prepared to redefine the nature and scope of university activity. Second, the Northern Virginia community is a fast-developing, hi-tech area, in close proximity to Washington DC. It

continues to attract such major corporate institutions as Mobil Oil and Xerox. The educational level of its population is very high - 50% of the inhabitants of the largest county have a college education - as are the educational demands made by parents and business. Third, both university and community are geared to innovation. It is possible in such a context to create `systems-busting' institutions, even though institutional conservatism and inertia are always powerful. Finally there was an existing example of excellence in collaboration: the university and the school divisions had for ten years supported the Northern Virginia Writing Project which itself had developed a strong emphasis on teachers as researchers (see Mohr and McClean 1987).

In this favorable context, the Center was established as a collaboration between nine Northern Virginia school divisions and the University. Hugh Sockett was hired as Director in 1987, and the Associate Director, Todd Endo, is released from Fairfax County Public Schools for a quarter of his time. As Director of Fairfax's Office of Research and Evaluation, Endo had been promoting school-based research and development by teachers and he was the author of the CARD mission statement. Sockett had experience with institutional innovation at the (former) New University of Ulster and at East Anglia and had more than a nodding acquaintance with the work of CARE and its political and intellectual origins.

I

STRUCTURE, PARTNERSHIP AND SUBSTANCE

The Center did not spring fully armed from the mission statement or the discussions between the University and the school divisions. Rather, a conscious decision was made to engage all interested education professionals across the nine school divisions in the creation of the institution `bottom up' and frameworks had to be established to provide that opportunity. Partnership, a better phrase than collaboration, was therefore open to education professionals within a general climate of passive support from the nine school divisions and the University.

The budget is modest, to say the least. The CARD office is provided by Falls Church City Public Schools, (one of the nine member divisions) and CARD is thus based in a Junior-Senior High School; partly for convenience but partly to indicate an allegiance to practice. Arlington County Public Schools sponsors CARD's quarterly newsletter. Two other school divisions have commissioned consultancy work which provides additional financial and political support. The initial planning committee decided not to negotiate up-front financial commitments from the school divisions, to avoid any possible risk that CARD might have to kowtow to their agendas.

All who come into contact with CARD as participants do so out of professional interest, not as a result of a hierarchical

allocation process. Thus in the meetings held within CARD, people attend as volunteering individual professionals, although there are occasionally representatives of this or that institution, usually as a result of misunderstandings. There is no exclusive `membership' of CARD: any professional can join in.

Three major features of the Center seem, as CARD approaches the end of its second year, to be retrospectively significant as they relate both to the development of professionalism and to the epistemology implied by the practical model.

Structure

Collaborations demand a distinctive institutional structure not a mere partnership between existing institutions. Some lessons about educational innovations have already been learnt: many curriculum projects of the 1960s and 1970s, for example, were extremely fragile, however well-funded they were in their development phase. The same could be true of university centers. Equally, collaborations are often dependent on enthusiastic volunteers within institutions who may move to other posts, leaving behind them not so much a loss of commitment but no strong institutional framework within which activity can be promoted.(Parish, Underwood and Eubanks 1986-7)

For its structure CARD has built a system of networks and forums. The Networks group education professionals broadly into roles. There is thus a Teachers' Network, a Principals' Network and a Network for Community, Administrative, Business and Lay Educators, known as CABLENET. University faculty are invited to

attend any of these, although it has recently been proposed that a network be created for faculty to include George Mason and universities with outposts in Northern Virginia. The agenda for the first meetings of Networks was the brainstorming of appropriate topics on which CARD might work: the proposed topics were grouped into Forums, twenty-seven in all. A Forum thus seeks to bring together professionals interested, severally, in such areas as Minority Student Achievement, Structuring Schools, Early Childhood Education, Gender Equity and so forth. Each Network and Forum determines its own agenda. This proposed structure was implemented after wide circulation for comment and criticism.

The central key to this approach was two-fold: First, education professionals, whatever their role, had to be given a sense of ownership of the Center, and second, the structure had to allow for change and permanence.

a) ownership

Education professionals work in very different roles: some are classroom teachers, some have become assistant principals or principals, some are in Universities, some are central office administrators, supervisors and advisers and so on. Bureaucracies, within which all professionals work, can be tyrannical and exclusive: Tyrannical, not in that they are run by latter-day Attilas, but in that the institutional agendas drive the exercise of the roles, to which any would-be Attilas are also subject; exclusive, in that professionals get totally preoccupied with the agenda and the politics of their own

jurisdiction and exclude the learning opportunities available from their neighbors. Educational institutions are the political embodiments of epistemologies and they dominate the lives of their personnel.

Education professionals must somehow come to own the institution. This is a quite different aspiration for a collaborative than one in which negotiations for the new institution are conducted top-to-top. Ownership comes from collaboration not merely across institutions, but across professional roles. The first step toward that goal is a structure which is flexible. That is, we can't tell whether creating networks and forums per se is going to prove the best framework. We have had to revise the numbers of forums created: we have the proposal for a new network, for joint network meetings and so on. More important for ownership is flexibility of agenda. As forums and networks meet and adjust to their novel context, so there will be an instability of agenda which will gradually be negotiated and refined: but it may just as easily shift. Second the structure must celebrate professional equality. So, for example it must make possible adaptation to new roles; e.g. a classroom teacher chairing a meeting including academics and administrators. That can take time: professionals invariably meet with status-consciousness, finding role-cloaks difficult to shrug off. Third, it must create the space for interaction for people from different jurisdictions and it must begin to provide for them a focus of identity outside a workplace

role. There needs to be a constant search for ways to offer ownership and for it to be accepted.

b) Change and Permanence

If the flexibility of the structure (and the agenda) is necessary to adapt to the development of ownership, how is this reconciled with the demand for permanence? In the process of giving the whole institution and its separate parts permanence, it becomes apparent that the institutional framework must have both a sense of adaptability to changing need and sufficient permanence to enable individuals to relate to its parts. It must permit flexibility, and therefore must expect to be seen as vague for those used to hierarchical patterns of work. As agendas take time to settle, activity within the structure will be seen as ambiguous, vague and slow-moving, particularly in a dynamic society used to the quick fix.

This is not at odds with the need for permanence. For us the notion of permanence is that the structure will provide sufficient stability, in respect of access and organization to enable professionals to move in and out of CARD work, as other professional commitments allow. It will not, like the typical curriculum project, no longer be there in two years time. CARD needs to remain open to structural change, while offering a firm pattern of organization to which individuals can relate. Above all, individuals need to share these understandings.

Our conclusion on structure is that the framework is a crucial piece in collaboration-design. It must facilitate

ownership and adjust to a context of change and permanence. This process of institutionalization of an innovatory center needs to be carefully monitored and consistently evaluated for its effectiveness. For example, the original plan for regular central meetings of networks and forums may need to be modified by `local', perhaps `branch' meetings with an annual full meeting.

Partnership

Implicit in this account of the structure is a principle of equality between education professionals (principal, teacher, administrator, researcher) and institutions (schools, universities). That is not merely equal opportunity to join or to contribute to the work of CARD, but a symbol of a common professionalism. That common professionalism extends to content and process. The commitment to partnership includes a continuing exploration of what professionalism and its obligations are. These principles are expressed in the brochure:

"CARD's Beliefs

CARD believes that

- practicing educators are too isolated and need opportunities to share, reflect, plan and act together;
- practicing educators are equally teacher and learner, leader and follower;
- collaboration among colleagues will increase the effectiveness of each participant and the whole;
- creativity and initiative are at the core of professionalism;
- real life is the source of wisdom and thus theory must be grounded in practice and research must be grounded in action, and
- practicing educators possess an unlimited reservoir of good ideas."

The most obvious way in which partnership is realized is

through the development of the agenda for each network and forum. Each professional is a source of differential knowledge and understanding about the practice of teaching, yet a common assumption among many educational researchers in search of objective knowledge is that teachers are simple technicians. It is no accident that the major publication by the US Department of Education on the application of research to schools is called What works. (US Dept of Education 1986) (Works, you will notice, not challenges or intrigues, but works.) Teachers rapidly are socialized by situation and by the need to look for what works- the `hunger for technique' as Lortie describes it.(Lortie 1975) Researchers support that hunger. One will look for a classroom or two where teachers will practice what he or she has designed and `test it'. Another will `market' a technique to groups across the nation. And so on. These traditional patterns of research activity, with the teacher as consumer and user of products are familiar enough. Yet the primary weakness of these patterns is the extent to which the teacher is then professionally undermined, the extent to which the epistemology they encounter actually makes their experience `worthless' even though it looks like support. It emasculates many teachers. It inhibits the opportunities for them to become developers, researchers or producers, not least because opportunities are not provided for them to test out their ideas with a broad audience.

The establishment of a partnership of mutual expertise is thus much more complex than developing a structure. The

differential status of people within administrative and academic hierarchies effectively `silences the teacher's voice'.(Richert 1988) For CARD, three things are required. The first is the patient creation and development of leadership roles not determined by status. The second is a continuing validation of the teacher's experience and the quest to involve university faculty in that enterprize. But the third is a mutual responsibility for building the partnership and for exploring the obstacles to it. All who wish to practice professionalism have to find out how to do it, and how to create a discourse about it.

Substance

The third key factor in the development of CARD is the commitment to an substantive idea of what would constitute professional practice. This commitment shifts CARD away from being simply a mechanism of cooperation. For CARD the twin notions of reflective practice and teacher-research constitute the substance.

This is not the place to examine the work of Donald Schon (Schon 1983) or Lawrence Stenhouse (Stenhouse 1983). The question is in what ways might the force of these ideas be critiqued and expanded institutionally.

First, a pervasive theme throughout CARD discussions has to be an examination of what educational `talk and action' ought to be. Debate about what constitutes educational theory and practice is not simply an arcane encounter among academics, but in universities is reflected in hotblooded controversy. Very few

education professionals address the question of the nature of the enquiry they are engaged in: rather they take the assumptions of positivism in educational theory as a kind of common sense. (see Schon 1985) Yet as they try to work out, say, how very different schools, each wanting to promote the teaching of higher-order thinking skills to low-ability minority children can get sufficiently similar activity going, so they are entering a quite new realm of thought about educational thought and practice.

Second, the power of the traditional positivist model in educational research is such that the development of an institution devoted to an alternative view, at the very least, takes time and care. Our first stage has been like the opening of a conversation, in the Networks and Forums. That is trivially a form of teacher empowerment: it is `unsilencing the teacher's voice' in the educational enterprise and creating a mutually supportive climate. So teachers begin to talk evenly with principals or administrators, to university people and to their colleagues in other jurisdictions. It is a conversation unfettered by any form of `assessment'; it is serious and it is free, cut off too from the small-time politics of individual institutions.

Yet that conversation has to be in a language. Sometimes teachers do speak a proto-research language, (the kind of common-sense referred to) and they need to see the descriptive and explanatory power of other languages, drawn from Schon and

Stenhouse. So while they may couch their discussion in the language of Maslow, Skinner, 4MAT or whatever as they talk, it is critical for that to become self-conscious and for all professionals to explore the language of others. Stenhouse, for example, writes with great passion about emancipation, not empowerment: about vernacular humanism (as a contemporary context for the humanities) whilst Schon presents portraits, of Quist and his student which introduces a language of design.

The second stage is the development of ways of thinking with intellectual rigor which match the conversation. That is a process which, for any constituency of people, is one of exploration and uncertainty. That means beginning to relax in a context of tolerable ambiguity. CARD is about to begin the second stage, though the two stages will always overlap. The crucial feature here is the notion of an educational idea being at the heart of the collaboration: it is not collaboration for collaboration's sake, but a collaboration moved by a concern for reflective practice and teacher-research.

Eighteen months after the foundation of CARD, these three features, structure, partnership and substance seem critical aspects of institutional design. The task is monumental and its ambitions may outrun its spirit. As yet, it is too early to be thoroughly confident, except in the way that education professionals from very different roles respond.

II

PRACTICAL PROFESSIONALISM: THE EMERGING CHALLENGES

There are five major challenges CARD has to respond to at this early stage of its development: the challenges of i) the agenda, ii) ownership, iii) professional career conflict, iv) innovation and v) leadership. No doubt, in twelve months time, these challenges will be differently construed.

To be a profession, teaching must get hold of its accountability and its research. (see Sockett 1989b) The accountability of teachers is broadly bureaucratized through the various mechanisms that the phenomenon of mass education has thrown up: it is not a system which teachers designed. Yet both in school-based management systems in the US and in moves to weaken local authority control in the UK there are opportunities for the professionals to pick up the challenge.

The Challenge of the Agenda

Getting hold of research is a different matter. Research and development agenda on education are rarely constructed by teachers. They spin out of the heads of academic researchers with ideas to explore, or dead horses to flog, often progressively within the limitations of a particular research canon. Alternatively, problems are defined from the top, wherever that happens to be. Governments and Foundations focus on needs they define. Of course, such agenda are political - as indeed they always will be - but teachers in the classrooms have no say in their development.

First, need teachers always be left out of the establishment

and execution of research and development agenda except as it appears through their unions? **Across the profession practitioners must become a major engine for taking our understanding of teaching and teaching excellence forward.** (see Shulman 1985) Some can and will become teacher-researchers, examining their own practice and sharing that enterprise with others. They can become part of the attempt to ensure that schools do become places where teachers learn, and learn through rigorous research on practice. This is a development which seems conspicuously part of teaching professionalism. The challenge is to invent ways to facilitate teacher participation in the definition and execution of the agenda for research and development. Presently the agenda is defined elsewhere.

Second, existing sources of research agenda are sources of power: and there is a marketplace competition for funds. That is a market teachers will have to enter, qua teachers. They will need to construct a research and development agenda with other education professionals from their practical deliberations: and that will constitute a threat to those bureaucrats (in education offices?) or professionals (in universities?) who wish to limit the competition. Even though teachers see that they can define the agenda for the research they want to participate in, that very attempt begins to undermine existing sources of the agenda, whether in the school division or in the university. Teachers are, of course, making a claim for resources which, if allocated, will not be allocated elsewhere. Moreover, they are also claiming

opportunities of time (which have resource-implications) for activities which may be regarded as outside contractual limits. Teachers are not employed to undertake research and development. As teachers, or collaborative institutions of which they are a part, seek resources to develop an agenda, they encounter power-blocs.

CARD has some experience over the past two years of these problems of the agenda for research and development. First, in bringing together different school divisions and the university, there are substantial demarcation problems. On any given area in which teachers see research as needed, there may be nine different sets of interests as there are nine school divisions. Some divisions already have a research and development program internally funded and designed by an `administrator/researcher' who may have little interest in, and even hostility toward, a coordinated program of work across divisions. Others give low priority, administratively, to problems which teachers rate as very important.

Second, university staff may have their own clear perceptions of `what needs doing' in an area and lack any commitment to working with teachers except as tools of their own work. It is thus possible to find a group of teachers with a clearly articulated sense of direction for research and development related to practice but without anyone experienced in proposal-writing or prepared to volunteer their time and with little support from either university or school division.

Moreover, Education faculty correctly perceive it to be much easier to negotiate an agenda privately with administrators than to seek it with groups of teachers. If they are productive researchers they will also have existing agenda of their own.

Third, there is a distinction made between research and development in the academic world which is reflected in federal state and foundation funding. `Development' money by the bucketful may pour out of the federal coffers on politically sensitive educational areas, e.g. special education, bilingual education, `at-risk' children: but `development' means a focus on new curricula, institutional changes, and immediately useful products which can be marketed. `Research' funds, on the other hand, seem to focus on usable generalizable conclusions on `what works'. Teacher-research in an `applied research' mode seems to fall between the two stools of research and development, as its horizons are too long and its focus is not generalizable in the sense that sponsors seem to think valuable. That distinction of `research' and `development' is fallacious for an epistemology of practice, as described, for example by Schon (Schon op cit). It is drawn precisely from the model which the epistemology seeks to replace.

CARD's response to the three aspects of the challenge of the agenda is not yet fully-fledged. First, we seek to develop proposals through forums with mutual responsibility for the design and proposed participation. That represents an effort to ensure that `authorities' become accustomed to teacher

involvement in research and development design. That may mean the creation of opportunities in a familiar style out of which negotiations for teacher involvement can be developed, e.g. by the negotiation of a traditional contract with a school division out of which a different kind of contract can be negotiated. Second, the autonomy of university faculty is such that opportunities can only be offered and participation invited since faculty member may perceive little pay-off (given existing criteria) in the time-consuming process of building a different culture. The catch-22 is that university investment in a collaborative will not, from that point of view, be seen as delivering the goods: that is, the presentation of a clear context for a researcher to move in and exercise his or her talents. Third, proposals for funding may best be couched in the broader framework of professional development.

In sum, this challenge of the agenda reaches far into issues of the government of education. En passsant, the second largest school division participating in CARD, Prince William County, is moving to a system of site-based management which will have the eventual effect of enabling the schools to use central office specialists as advisers and consultants rather than working under their direction. As that substantial reform gets under way, the schools may be more effectively placed to ensure that they have a major say in the definition of the agenda for research and development.

<u>The Challenge of Ownership</u>

Networks and Forums in CARD provide opportunities for education professionals, from different roles, to hold office and carry responsibility as part of the pattern of developing professional ownership of the Center. Working in CARD gives a professional a new and active role to learn in an institution exploring its own definition. Becoming an owner is a major learning experience with dimensions which are not yet clear. It is easy to <u>say</u> 'you own it' but more difficult to ensure that it happens. The challenge of ownership is to create professional identity as owners of an exploratory professional institution.

The dimensions of this challenge are at different levels. First, learning new roles is complex. Chairpersons need to learn the skills of chairmanship which are both executive and enabling. Some have experience of executive chairmanship where the task is a given: few have experience of managing other adults in a learning experience. The fact that CARD is in an early stage of growth and that time is at a premium means that the composition of different Networks and Forums changes: new members require induction. Moreover with a University and nine school divisions, individuals will be rooted in a range of different cultures with differences of style. Professionals have to learn how to occupy roles with these diverse parameters.

Second, most professionals come to those CARD activities which are of particular interest to their main role. Committed to innovation and development, professionals find themselves critiquing their own institutional (division or school) policies

and, in some cases, learning to do so with some distance. Equally, those policies can be subject to critique by others, from different divisions. While the positive aspect of focused discussion is the opportunity to learn from others and use their ideas, the critique too must come to be valued as a major aspect of professional autonomy. There are some occasions when the etiquette of respect for the work of another division inhibits that critique. On others, professionals from different divisions can easily distance themselves from their formal role. Professionals are `allowed' within university programs or in-house meetings to criticize. In the seminar their comments are, as it were, sanctioned. The CARD professional is more exposed: he or she volunteers interest; his or her critique is independently given and is unprotected. Developing a sense of ownership therefore implies developing an independence of an existing role. That may be easy for university faculty, but much harder for a teacher or an administrator.

Third, ownership in a research and development institution demands not merely the development of critical distance, but the engagement in different forms of critical evaluation. Few educational institutions are actually interested in process as opposed to content evaluation. Dominant evaluation modes, furthermore, are either too open or too goal-oriented. Professionals want to evaluate ideas or proposals in terms of function and applicability: they are unaccustomed to dealing with the hypothetical, in content terms, or to evaluating their own

work as a learning experience. Wheels must never be re-invented: navels must be left unexamined. As the epistemology of practice is explored and new institutional relations created, so the criteria of evaluation shift to process. Embracing ownership thus anticipates a much broader perspective of evaluative enquiry.

The CARD structure begins to give professionals an alternative identity, and they can become ambassadors for its ideas and the major dimensions of that challenge appear to be the learning of new roles and relationships, particularly in the development of a critical distance and a familiarity with different perspectives of inquiry.

The Challenge of Professional Career Conflicts

The criteria for career progress both for university faculty and for teachers are familiar and they are, to some extent, interlocked. For university faculty in the US working more closely with schools and teachers raises the perennial problem of rewards and promotions. With published research remaining the dominant criterion, there is a positive disincentive to many faculty, as they see it, to take the risk. Yet university teaching is also influenced by teacher-student perceptions. Faculty have also become accustomed to a pattern of teacher in-service demand which seeks 'cash' rewards: Masters' Degrees are worth this much salary increase, credit courses for recertification are a condition of employment and so on. The dominance of pre-specified objectives in teaching at all levels leaves little room for mutual exploration of complex issues

between teacher and student: indeed the pressure from students is for clear definition of `what is required' to make the grades, to get the award. "What", asks the typical teacher-student of his or her professor in respect of an assignment, "do you want?" The pedagogical impact of such attitudes is that courses are heavily instructional. Furthermore, in many institutions, student evaluation of courses is the primary source of rating a professor's teaching ability (which in turn will influence his or her salary). The risk of seeking to create a different pedagogical environment matching a notion of professional equality is considerable. Yet teachers have to get credits for recertification on a regular basis. Reward systems are geared simply to classroom performance and the priorities of time and energy do not lead to an ambiguous uncertain enterprise.

Both for the teacher and the university faculty, therefore, CARD activity cuts across well established patterns of career progress. It is unrewarded in university promotion criteria: its exploratory character makes it an uncertain `subject' for a `course'. Both for classroom teacher and for academic faculty, the challenge of professionalism and an epistemology of practice conflicts with established norms. These factors in career structure are rooted in the traditional epistemology of theory and practice, in shared perceptions of the purposes of a University, and in the fractured profession of which educators are members. The traditional epistemology supposes that research and development ideas are theories which can be applied to

practice if they can be learnt in the university by practitioners who then go forth and implement them. Both student and faculty, as we have seen, are locked into a relationship driven by their different career structures. Both of these factors indicate how the profession of teaching is split between theory and practice, and between researcher, administrator and practitioner. (Sockett 1989a)

The challenge for an institution seeking to alter them is to create a culture, not a cult, within which the framework of a professional's identity is understood as something that might be otherwise. (see Leibermann 1988) It seeks to create different conceptions of `career', to expand and to reshape conventional expectations.

CARD is beginning to engage with these complex issues, first, by undertaking experimental masters levels programs which celebrate its educational principles: e.g. by promoting a course (called an Internship in Education) which will allow a teacher-student to study an aspect of their own work in schools, and by offering an individualized program (called Origins and Horizons) which will enable a teacher-student to begin the process of reflection on their educational practice by examining it in the light of their educational ideology and constructing from that a perspective on that individual's career future in the classroom. CARD is also seeking to establish summer programs with graduate credit. Finally CARD would like to find some way in which the work done in CARD by its members who need it can also be

recognized for credit. The urgency is demonstrable: one teacher has recently told us that, while she values the CARD work very much, she needs to limit her work in it so that she can get an MA. We need to find institutional ways to remove that tension. Yet that will still contain problems: for instance, the balance may be difficult to strike between supporting a system of legitimate rewards and becoming merely a convenient source of credit.

For university faculty the problem is well expressed by Clifford and Guthrie in their demand that schools of education turn their focus away from the university to the schools.(Clifford and Guthrie 1989) With that comes the large problem of shifting the criteria of promotion and tenure to support those faculty who wish to discover and work in new patterns of relationships with other education professionals. The difficulty for a fragile new Center is to resist the power of existing arrangements. If the tension between CARD activities and existing career demands can be resolved, that will only be part of the answer: the Center's activities need to become a priority for education professionals.

The Challenge of Innovation

Education is manifestly a political matter. In both the UK and the US it has become increasingly politicized. The central problem of change in mass education is this: Political horizons are very short; educational horizons are very long. For the politician, if there is something wrong, then it can (or must) be

`fixed'. Results have to be there within 2-5 years: and, if it hasn't `worked', the political opponent will engineer other manifestos and slogans. The parent with a 10 year old child wants changes now - or it is too late. In Northern Virginia, as elsewhere, the systems have to respond to these kinds of political imperatives.

The length of educational horizons is assumed by politicians to be an excuse for incompetence. But the implementation of, say, a different mathematics curriculum may require a generation of schooling to establish success or failure. CARD experiences, as education professionals of creativity and initiative come together, the development of radical diagnoses of institutions and policies such that the horizon of change is out of sight. For example, how might the school curriculum be changed to counter the appallingly high 25% dropout of American secondary students? What has to be done to offset the fact that most American children do not study any mathematics beyond Grade 9? That kind of agenda, even if resources were available and variables could be controlled, is not to be realized within a one-term Presidency.

This mismatch of the political quick fix and the reality of the problems as perceived by education professionals is compounded in CARD. For the differences between a positivist and a practical model, as they find embodiment in conceptions of professionalism and in institutions, are very profound. The traditional model, coupled with political myopia, is geared to

the quick fix. The real danger for CARD is that it will be seen as a potential quick fix (albeit of a funny kind) which, if it `delivers' few `results', will be trashed.

That unfortunate possibility has to be guarded against. One minor protection, as far as operating circumstances allow, is to keep institutional base-line funding low to avoid the attraction of a cut and seek to live off soft money with ground-level, small-sum grants for specific tasks matching the ideals of CARD. That way, a constituency of support can be built offering the best opportunity of preserving the institution and allowing its reputation and the quality of its work to grow. The challenge of innovation is how CARD can sustain a long-term horizon within a political and social context of short-term change.

The Challenge of Leadership

Professionalism, it has been claimed, demands a context of equality. Manifestly, that implies rejecting any general view of hierarchy in which the classroom teacher is at the bottom. It does not mean that there will be equality of contribution, insight or experience among education professionals. But it does mean that teachers make the largest contribution.

The challenge of leadership within this kind of institution is to create a `community of leaders' who contribute to the articulation and implementation of its vision. Roland Barth sees schools as places where professionals can each have the opportunity to exercise leadership: not in the sense that leadership responsibilities are seen as `just part of the job'

but in the search for those enthusiasms and skills which individuals have which can be set in a leadership context. (Barth 1988) Forums and Networks have to be challenged by the belief that `educators are equally teacher and learner, leader and follower' (see page 10). Moreover understanding this as a challenge is something those who participate in CARD must accept.

It would be disingenuous to suggest that the vision is clear and coherent to everyone in CARD, or to suppose that it has arisen or has been articulated by large cross-role groups of professionals. It has come from the basic mission statement and been developed by us. Yet we have merely been initiators, as forum and network chairs and others have picked up the challenge. Through particular kinds of work and meetings, conversations and workshops, the ideas gradually gain currency within the CARD constituency. The crux for us has been not how to share the vision but how to get professionals to see that they can develop and reshape its rough-hewn state.

Practically, this implies the testing out of as many ideas for development as can reasonably be handled: to support a `forum of one' (where a determined person pursues an interest); to be prepared to plan workshops or conferences which fail to attract; to be acutely sensitive to the articulation of ideas or phrases which catch the sense (The Teachers' Network was called `a professional library of people' by Phyllis Porter, a Prince William County teacher); or to promote ideas which then lie dormant waiting for money or an enthusiast. Above all, it is to

build through the feeling of ownership a sense that CARD is a vision to be portrayed.

III

CONCLUSION

CARD is at a beginning. It differs from most consortia in that we have not been constructed with a clear agenda agreed by the hierarchies of collaborating institutions. It has to make its way. It is interpreting the notion of `collaboration' as both across institutions and school divisions and between the levels of education professionals. It is focussing on the development of a culture and a constituency which does not quickly yield the kind of research results which universities instantly recognize. Its mission has shifted, in part, as the development of the Restructuring Schools Movement, the work of the Center for Institutional Renewal, and the movement to teacher professionalism has gained pace. Collaboration is not a fixed goal, but a principle of procedure constantly to be interpreted. The Center stands for professional equality and for that different epistemology, roughly characterized as reflective practice.

George Mason University proclaims its mission as one to the Northern Virginia community, a fast-paced, fast-growing, hi-tech society. It is too early to judge whether its flexible design is an ideal, except in its focus on the educational professional as an individual rather than as a role-player. From the university perspective, it is an exploration in the ways in which the

'interactive' university can find its place in the education community.

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